

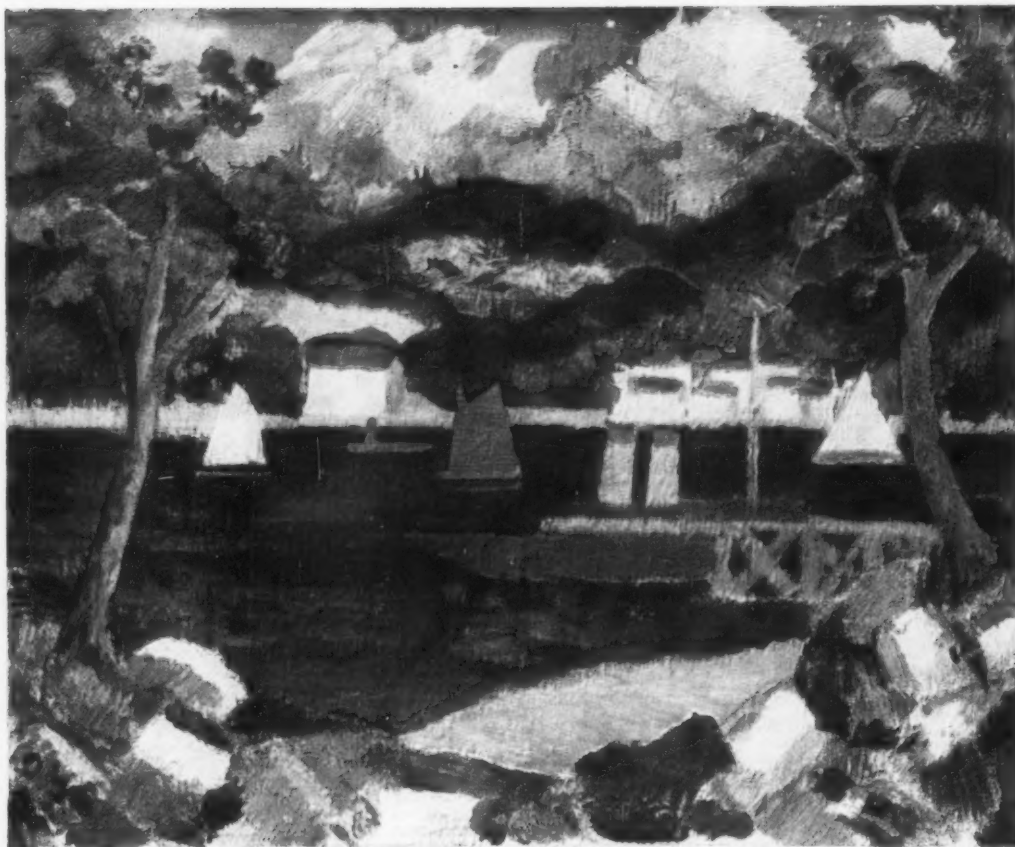
# SCOTTISH ART REVIEW



OH! DID THIS

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# The SCOTTISH ART REVIEW

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## EDITORIAL

THE Festival of Britain is about to close down and the post-mortems are about to begin. Our excuses for the late appearance of this number are more in the nature of explanations. The delay was deliberate. With the great mass of printed material, brochures, catalogues, posters, programmes, etc., the resources of paper-makers and printers were strained beyond reasonable expectations. Therefore we held our hand and allowed the exhibitions and celebrations to come and go. One result is that we have benefited from the experience of others. Not all the Festival events have been as successful as the time, talent and money spent on them deserved. It is not our business to be wise after the event, but it is our privilege and pleasure to congratulate the University on the success which attended the great number of events by which they celebrated the Quincentenary. It was a joy to hear the comments of so many distinguished visitors to our city, to mark their surprise and delight over the abundance and quality of our art treasures, and to note, with regret, something implicit in their enthusiasm. 'Why', they seemed to say, 'were we not told of the beauties of your immediate surroundings—of the loveliness of your Firth of Clyde—of your great history—your institutions—your benefactors in science, industry and the arts? Why do you dim your lights?'

In other words we have been made more conscious of the fact that we are very bad publicists. To bring it nearer home it cannot be too often said that those of us who are privileged to be the custodians of great possessions are changing the direction of our thinking. We should perhaps more often turn our eyes and thoughts away from the treasures in our keeping towards the citizen and visitor who have not yet found the door to their full enjoyment.

## OH! DID THIS

(This is the signature generally used on Mavor drawings)

OSBORNE HENRY MAVOR achieved distinction and international repute as a playwright, using the pseudonym 'James Bridie'. He was a native of Glasgow, born there in 1888. His organised education, in so far as he allowed it to be organised, was conducted at Glasgow Academy. From there he passed to the study of medicine in the University, where he is chiefly remembered as the creator of the leading role in *The Best Years of Undergraduate Life*—the play which every generation rewrites for itself. The family background and early associations are entertainingly described in two books. One of these is by O.H.'s uncle, James Mavor, who was Professor of Economics in the University of Toronto—the other is the Bridie autobiography *One Way of Living*.

Professor Mavor's book *My Window on the Street of the World* is a large two-volumed production, packed with reminiscences and comments on affairs ranging all over the world. It also puts on record more or less

intimate contacts with an amazing number and variety of people. The earlier chapters depict the Glasgow scene and reveal the close association of the Mavor family with the artists who became known as the *Glasgow School of Painters*. Indeed, James Mavor took over the editorship of the *Scottish Art Review*, which was, in effect, the journal of the school, although it achieved a much higher level than the general run of School Magazines. It was a very valiant effort, combining amateur and professional standards in critical writing and almost succeeding in bringing gown and town into harmony on the aesthetic scale.

Osborne Mavor seems to have inherited his talent in art from his father, who 'was fond of making caricatures, and indifferent about subject and occasion'. In a certain Buchan village the Monday morning gossips were wont to whisper 'The chiel Mavor was drawin' in the kirk' (a book of Henry Mavor sketches contains some very fine drawing).



THREE CHRISTMAS CARDS AND A BOOKPLATE

These were all done on the backs of ordinary size visiting cards.

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A magazine complex clearly derives from Uncle James. In collaboration with his younger brother Jack, who functioned as business manager, O.H. had two school magazines to his credit, *The Kernel* and *The Tomahawk*. And as everybody who knows anything of University history admits, his period of office as editor of the *Glasgow University Magazine* (the *G.U.M.*) was a highlight of witty comment, brilliant satire in prose and verse, playful provocation and crass impertinence.

The Academy efforts in magazine production were not universally applauded. The editor, in retrospect, protests that the first, *The Kernel*, was 'a blameless periodical completely without originality or any kind of intellectual content'. The second, *The Tomahawk*, had enough in it to bring upon O.H. the rage of the Rector, who, following a dressing down, dismissed the culprit by remarking 'The only good thing about it is that it is the last number'. The admonition, if it was that, did not in any way arrest the development along their respective lines—art and industry—of either the editor or his business manager.

The present writer does not consider himself qualified to analyse or assess the value of James Bridie's contribution to the English-speaking theatre. (Prof. W. L. Renwick's recent article 'James Bridie, the Playwright' in the *Glasgow College Courant*, is a delightful and warm-hearted summary, which, we hope, is merely the preamble to a larger work.) But I share the view of others, who have long been convinced that if O.H. had cared to apply his mind and gifts to the graphic arts as he did to playwriting he would have achieved an equally great and universal degree of appreciation. Because he became known as a dramatist this other aspect of his genius has been ranked lower than



The caption of this drawing in colour is: Rich Man giving a poor man a penny for his thoughts . . .

Poor Man: I was just thinking that your wife looks very vulgar.

Rich Man: Oh, she does, she does, doesn't she? Here is another penny.

it merited. And the same observation is valid when one thinks of him as poet and essayist.

The school-boy sketches had enough in them to lead to conflicting counsel on his subsequent career. It is a very wise parent who can discover the natural inclinations of his son and direct him accordingly. The Mavor home seems to have functioned as an annexe to the Art Club. In addition to distinguished writers like Neil Munro and Cunninghame Graham, most of the artists of the day—(Macaulay Stevenson is the sole survivor)—were frequent visitors. Fra New-





'NYATT'

Exhibited Art Gallery, Toronto, 1920

bery, the head of the Glasgow School of Art, led others in predicting a career in art for young Mavor. His father, however, hauled down the airy prophecies to a more matter of fact level. 'I shall teach him a trade first. If I don't, I have a suspicion what sort of an artist he will be.' Evidently he had visions of the Art Club and its reputation as the place where they tell tinted tales. O.H. brought relief to the household by announcing his decision to become a doctor. He later admitted that the decision was right, even if it were reached for the wrong reason. He hated the idea of having to walk to work. Doctors usually went around in a brougham.

When still at school O.H. received his first commission. An uncle on his mother's side, Robert McCrone (father of Guy McCrone, who made and sustains a considerable reputation as a novelist) owned a creamery at Ballochmyle. To advertise its products

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a series of blotters with topical jingles and appropriate illustrations was produced. Thanks to Jack Mavor I have the lot in front of me now. They date from 1903, when O.H. was fifteen, and they are as effectively clumsy as one would expect them to be. But they are original. It is not necessary for the purposes of this account to look for 'influences' and 'derivations'. It is just as well, for there are none in the schoolboy essays.

When one comes to the *G.U.M.* period and the range of family bookplates and Christmas Cards, especially the series done for Uncle Sam Mavor, one begins to see the beginning of an orderly sequence and an awareness of art tendencies and fashions. (By the way Sam Mavor, in a volume, *Memories of People and Places*, gives a fine account of the family enterprises, especially the work in the field of electrical engineering.) A glance through the illustrations of *The Yellow Book* (1894-96) will show that O.H., in addition to a salute to his *Glasgow School* friends,

hovered more than a little over Aubrey Beardsley, Patten Wilson, Anning Bell and Max Beerbohm. The search which led me to arrive at this view also unearthed an observation on critics by Max Beerbohm (Vol. II. July, 1894): 'Where they see not beauty let them be silent, reverently feeling that it may yet be there and train their dull senses in quest of it.' O.H. in his periods of exasperation has produced variations on the same theme.

The caricatures of his undergraduate days, as published in the *G.U.M.* and in the collected portfolio of lithographs (1914), are a record of a brilliant commentator. His witty verses, songs and epigrams were more than matched in the forms created by his incisive line and sense of design. He helped more than anybody to emphasise the undergraduate tradition, that, at the seat of learning, fun and laughter should never be at a discount. He poked fun at his teachers but, by nature,

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he could not be a mere iconoclast. He upheld the idols but could not resist the urge to shoot the boots off the clay feet. It is easy to spot those he revered, those he enjoyed, those he laughed at and those he wanted to debunk. And with malice towards none.

The claims of an individual as a personality are acknowledged in his selection and in his emphasis on peculiarities and mannerisms. He built on the individual rather than on a situation or an incident and thereby succeeds in revealing the human qualities in the collective aspects of university life. The 1914-18 war led O.H. into new and varied experiences. Some are recorded in his *Some Talk of Alexander*, others are scattered in innumerable sketches and drawings. He continued to exercise his gift of caricature, especially related to war episodes and characters. *The Tatler* was interested but he resisted their suggested amendments and was content to entertain himself and his friends.



The incursion into the Russian Ballet of Professor John Ferguson: 'Stamp louder, please. It reminds me of home.'  
(From the volume of *University Caricatures* published in 1914.)



A Series (a) A Tragic Policeman; (b) Lieut.-Colonel Simson: 'Kudos? What is a Kudo?' (c) The Prophecy—A comment on T.J.H.'s future when he forsook Glasgow for London; (d) Sir Walter Raleigh: 'This cloak is no longer fit to wear.'

Futile as it probably is, one finds it difficult to resist the idea that if he had linked together all his peculiar talents he would have qualified like James Thurber (there may be others) for the succession to Edward Lear. Eventually it was the Play which pushed Medicine into the background and 'doodling' continued solely as a pastime.

Almost entirely his most brilliant caricatures were of people within his immediate circle of friends and acquaintances in University, hospital or civic life. Very rarely did he venture to portray the peculiarities of national figures; nor when he achieved an important place in the theatre did he amuse himself or his 'victims' by exercising his pencil in what must have been a very rich field. Consequently, those who knew and remember James Bridie as distinct from O. H. Mavor will have to take my word for it that, especially and roughly from 1912-1920, his graphic work with pen and pencil is of outstanding merit. In addition to the test of 'seeing for oneself' there is the equally valid

testimony of those who know something about the matter. There was, at one time, the possibility of a sustained effort which might have reached a larger public. The *Scots Pictorial* succeeded in persuading him to decorate its pages, by, among other things, illustrating some verses by C.J.K. (the late Dr. Charles Kirk of Darlington, the Kipling of the *G.U.M.*). Finis was put to that adventure when the magazine was absorbed in a new Glasgow daily pictorial, *The Bulletin*.

Shortly thereafter James Bridie emerged, and gradually the interest in drawing and in the making of thumb-nail sketches petered out. The 'doodling' still continued though rather spasmodically. It depended on the nature of the committee or board meeting—the agenda and the protagonists. Now and then he would, as a relaxation, attempt something on a larger scale, a landscape or a small pastoral sketch. These were seldom successful and he did not seem to have any vital colour sense. (His younger son, Dr. Ronald Mavor (Bingo to his friends) is more gifted in this



A GALL-STONE DESCENDING THE COMMON BILE DUCT  
(Note the theatre association indicating the involved drama of human metabolism)



*OH! Did This*

respect.) His drawings may have become less exciting pictorially but in caricatures they remained as entertaining. His arrows were still sharp but he did not shoot them quite so far, except when he satirised modern tendencies in art, for example cubism and surrealism.

Although he does not appear ever to have completely designed the sets or garments in his costume plays, James Bridie was fortunate in being able to call on O.H. to give direction in rapid sketches and thus make his ideas completely coherent to those who had to do the job.

It has become a well-worn *cliché* that art is communication. With O.H. much of his scribbling is merely an intimate chit-chat between himself and his thoughts. He is talking to himself and instead of muttering he whispers in graphic incisive lines. To watch him it looked as if he started a line and let his ideas play around with it for a while. Then it took shape and began to drive him to make something of it. It came out of his system, so to speak, wrapped in a smile or occasionally a full-bellied guffaw. His apparent aimlessness led one to believe that the successful results were achieved by a happy accident; more often the 'accident' happened half-way and the completion was ordered and deliberate.

O.H. collected facts about people and the institutions and practices created by them. In his plays he made these into new people and situations. Sometimes he may have been helped towards finding the words he gave them by making their faces and peculiarities visual in the abstractions of a casual sketch.



'CIVILISATION, 1942'

I have no way of knowing.

All the arts have their common source in the imagination. O.H. was the most original and most versatile man I have ever known. He was also the most kindly. He was suspicious of reformers but he would rather give them his blessing than extend it to complacent conformers. All this, and more also, he has made clear in his plays and other writings. I imagine, as I turn over the great range of sketches, cartoons, caricatures and 'doodles', that he could not escape from the urge to pronounce the same benediction.

## SCOTLAND'S ANCIENT TREASURES

IT was with real regret that we began to dismantle the exhibition of 'Scotland's Ancient Treasures' in the main hall at Kelvingrove, and arrange for the treasures to be returned to their permanent home in the National Museum of Antiquities. During their stay of less than three months in Glasgow they have been a source of surprise, admiration and even affection to the many thousands of people who have been able to see them here, and we are deeply grateful to the National Museum and to its Keeper, Mr. R. B. K. Stevenson, for the great privilege of thus marking the Festival year.

Many of us who may have known of the existence of these treasures for some time have only now become really aware of them. Why is this? Part of the reason certainly lies in the settings of the treasures, settings designed to emphasise their quality in a way possible in a temporary exhibition. Divorced from their accustomed surroundings, they compel us to view them in a new light and often—with surprise—to realise how beautiful they really are. The refreshing mental shock thus inflicted is intensified by seeing the best craftsmanship of widely differing ages and cultures in a single exhibition, so that comparisons



SYMBOL-STONE, with the figure of a bull deeply incised; one of several found at Burghead, Morayshire.  
Pictish, 6th-7th century A.D.

not readily possible in the ordinary course of museum display can be made at a glance.

The purpose of the exhibition, then, was only indirectly historical and chronological, yet it may not be amiss to single out a few of the treasures and to try to relate their artistic background to their place in time. We first discern an appreciation of beauty in Neolithic or early Bronze Age times, a beauty that is in its origin functional and, it might be said, accidental. An axe of polished stone is more efficient than one not polished, yet as we look at the pair of axeheads of polished flint found near Fochabers, admire their elegant shape and the lovely grain of the stone, and reflect on the hours of toil required to fashion them, we cannot think that their maker was blind to the beauty of the things he had created. The simplicity which succeeds so well with these axeheads occurs again in the gold crescentic collar of the early or middle Bronze Age found near Sanquhar. True it is that the goldsmith at this time could work only in sheet metal and could decorate only with patterns of incised lines, yet he resists the temptation to decorate all the available surface and, with admirable restraint, allows the shape of the lunula and



BALL, carved out of black serpentine, found at Towie, Aberdeenshire; use unknown. Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, 2000-1500 B.C.

A2



WEST HIGHLAND BELL-SHRINE, long preserved at Guthrie Castle, Angus. Celtic bell with superimposed medieval ornament.

the lustre of the metal their due and merited effect. The mysterious Towie Ball, carved out of black serpentine at about the same period, or a little earlier, shows that the use of curves in decoration was not unknown; the intricate incised designs, perhaps ultimately derived from the Middle East, are no doubt religious or even magic in origin, designed to mystify and so to awe.

But it was the Celt who exploited the curve in decoration and drove it so fast and so far as at times to exceed its logical limit. The vivid flowering of early Celtic art in Britain, which produced the Torrs Chamfrein about 200 B.C., we owe to the social organisation of an age of chieftains of the Homeric type, of lords incessantly warring and striving each to outshine as well as to outfight the other; thus we gain our first certain glimpse of the effect of artistic patronage in Scotland.

The Pict, too, could use the curve with

effect, yet in a very different way. We seem to see in him a harking back to the restraint of the Bronze Age, in contrast to the undisciplined profusion of the Celt. He excels in his portrayal of animal forms: a loving observation of detail and a gift for line drawing, practised with an almost severe economy, produced figures which are the very essence of fish and animal.

In the Dark Ages the Church first began to exercise that patronage of the arts which ended only with the Reformation. The Mediterranean concepts introduced by the Church were absorbed or adapted with varying success by Celtic artists. The Monymusk (reproduced in colour on page 17) and similar reliquaries are supposed to be representations of the Temple at Jerusalem, on the evidence of a drawing from the Book of Kells. Perhaps the set nature of the subject is one of the reasons why the Monymusk Reliquary does not quite succeed as a work of art, attractive though it is. The design of intertwined animals incised on the silver plates is vigorous and intriguing, the medallions taken singly seem well worked out, the enamelled strap is perhaps the most effective part of all, yet one cannot help feeling that the result would have appalled the artist who made the Torrs Chamfrein! Bells and bell-shrines, evolved by Celts, were a different matter. St. Fillan's Bell is a noble example of what could be done by shape alone; the late twelfth cen-

tury bell-shrine from Kilmichael Glassary shows the Mediterranean and Celtic traditions reconciled to produce a treasure worthy of each.

One would hardly say that there is any attempt at such a reconciliation in the West Highland bell-shrine long preserved at Guthrie Castle, Angus, and hence known as the Guthrie bell-shrine. Upon a plain iron bell, of Celtic origin and Dark Age date, ornament largely Mediterranean in tradition was superimposed in the eleventh, twelfth and fifteenth centuries, and the whole regrouped at an even later date. Confusion would seem to be unavoidable in such a medley of traditions, yet the result has a force and unity wholly unexpected.

Almost the most recent objects in the exhibition, the fine Scottish pistols of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, seem to epitomise the best of previous ages. Practical weapons, and valued beyond Scotland as such, they show a fine sense of contrast in the choice of wood and metal, a flair for traditional decoration where the surface demands it, and yet the good taste to leave unornamented the space which looks better so. It is stimulating and encouraging to follow tradition and taste in this country in this way over a span of 3,500 years, and we in Glasgow are grateful to Edinburgh for having made such a journey possible, by lending us 'Scotland's Ancient Treasures'.



PENANNULAR BROOCH, of silver gilt, one of two known as the Cadboll Brooches. Celtic, about 800 A.D.

## A PORTRAIT BY ALLAN RAMSAY

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY is well provided with portraits of the most eminent men in its history. The importance of those representing the eighteenth century has long been recognised, and no exhibition of Scottish historical portraits has failed to include, in the section devoted to this period, a fair proportion of the University's pictures. Their interest is very largely iconographical, but one or two are paintings of intrinsic merit. Of these the most impressive is a three-quarter length of the philosopher, Francis Hutcheson, who from 1729 till his death in 1746 was Professor of Moral Philosophy. In none of the catalogues of University pictures, nor of the earlier exhibitions in which they have appeared, has there been an attribution for this picture which in any way could be described as convincing; it is my purpose here to show, I hope with acceptable evidence, that its painter was Allan Ramsay.

Hutcheson is an important figure among the British philosophers of the eighteenth century. He was born in Ireland near Armagh in 1649, but most of his active life was spent in Glasgow, where, in addition to his seventeen years as a professor, he had been a student of arts and divinity from 1711 to 1717. His place in the history of philosophy is as an exponent of the theory of the moral sense and his contributions to the study of aesthetics are of no less importance than his purely ethical writings. He was an able follower and upholder of the principles of Shaftesbury, to which he gave a still greater classical interpretation by his insistence on the authority of Cicero, Seneca and Epictetus. In Scotland he was the founder of a distinguished tradition—Adam Smith and Thomas Reid were successors to his chair in Glasgow, and David Hume as a young man turned to him for advice and help. His liberal and humanistic outlook brought him on occasion into conflict with the Kirk, but there can be little doubt that

his enlightened views influenced and sweetened the whole of Scottish thought throughout the second half of the eighteenth century.

There is no record of the precise date of the University's acquisition of the Hutcheson portrait, but it seems to have been at the Old College by 1769. In that year, Professor John Anderson offered to sell portraits of Hutcheson for £1 10s., and Robert Simson (Professor of Mathematics from 1711 to 1761) for £7 10s. The negotiations, as often happened where Anderson was concerned, were complicated and acrimonious, and they finally broke down. Anderson, however, allowed William Cochran to make, on the Faculty's commission, a copy of the Simson portrait, which is still in the University's possession.<sup>1</sup> The fact that no copy was made of the Hutcheson seems to indicate that there was already a portrait in the College; the small price asked by Anderson, moreover, suggests that his picture was in any case a copy and not an original.

In none of the earliest references to the portrait, which is unsigned, is there any sort of attribution. In the nineteenth century, a curious name, John Foulis, came to be attached to the picture. It first appeared, with no explanation, in the catalogue of the Glasgow Exhibition of Portraits, 1868 (No. 308), and was repeated in J. Young's *Catalogue of Pictures . . . in the University of Glasgow*, 1880 (No. 75) and on the occasion of the Old Glasgow Exhibition, 1894 (Cat. No. 1). No artist was found for it in the Catalogue of the Palace of History of the Glasgow Scottish Exhibition, 1911 (No. 142), but 'John Foulis' has reappeared, with qualifications, in the more recent University inventories. There was, as far as I can find, no painter of this name; the attribution may be explained by some misreading of Hutcheson's association

<sup>1</sup> References to these negotiations are contained in the Minutes of the Rector's Meeting and the Faculty for 1769 and 1770.





ALLAN RAMSAY

PORTRAIT OF FRANCIS HUTCHESON  
Oil on canvas, 49½ × 39½ ins.

with the brothers, Robert and Andrew Foulis, University printers and founders of the Academy of Art in the Old College. A brother of the printers was named John, but he usually spelt his surname 'Fauls' or 'Fowles'; and there is no record of him painting anything, even as an amateur.

In the University picture, Hutcheson is wearing academic dress; his left arm rests on a high table or lectern and his face is turned towards the spectator. In his right hand he holds a calf-bound volume, shown by the lettering on its spine to be, appropriately, Cicero's *De Finibus*. The pattern is conventional enough for a professional portrait, but the quality of the painting rises far above the standards usually considered sufficient for pictures of this kind. On stylistic considerations alone—the characterization of the head,

Portrait by Allan Ramsay

the assurance of the pose and the sensitive treatment of the drapery—an attribution to Allan Ramsay seems justifiable.<sup>2</sup> And documentary evidence, bringing reasonable certainty, has recently come to light. A copy of the 1745 edition of Hutcheson's *Philosophiae Moralis*, now in the Andrew Bain Memorial Collection in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, contains the following inscription by Dunbar, 4th Earl of Selkirk, one of Hutcheson's most devoted pupils:<sup>3</sup>

Pictori optimo  
Allano Ramsay  
ob Auctoris Imaginem,  
supra quam, heu! nunc sperari potuit,  
felicissime expressam;  
Hoc opus Philosophi sui,  
Scriptoris vitae atque consuetudinis  
Imaginem verissimam,  
gratus gaudensque obtulit  
praestantissimi viri Alumnus  
Selkirk,  
1748.

This may be translated:

'To Allan Ramsay, the best of Painters, for his portrait of the Author, now alas! the happiest likeness we may hope to see, that most Eminent Man's Pupil, Selkirk, is pleased to inscribe this work, a true likeness of the habitual temper of the writer's life, 1748.' Lord Selkirk's inscription shows beyond doubt that Ramsay painted a portrait of Hutcheson. There can be, I think, no question that it refers to the University portrait, so clearly Ramsay's on grounds of style.

There are records of a number of other portraits, some of which no longer survive. One of these, a good contemporary copy of the head and shoulders of the larger picture, also belongs to the University; it, too, probably has an association with Lord Selkirk,

<sup>2</sup> Mr. R. E. Hutchison of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and Mr. E. K. Waterhouse of the National Gallery of Scotland have both, independently, suggested this.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Mr. R. O. Dougan for telling me about this inscription.

*Portrait by Allan Ramsay*

being presented in 1897 by his great-grandson, Captain John Hope of St. Mary's Isle, and may have been made for him in Ramsay's studio. In 1900 W. R. Scott, in his book on Hutcheson,<sup>4</sup> mentions another portrait, then untraceable, at one time in the possession of Hutcheson's collateral descendants, the Ogles of Drumalaine in Co. Armagh.



MEDAL OF FRANCIS HUTCHESON (Obverse) Diam.  $4\frac{1}{4}$  ins.

Sir Robert Bannatyne, in information passed to me, thinks that what may have been still another was owned by his father, the late Mark Bannatyne of Glasgow, but this picture also seems to have disappeared. The picture offered to the University in 1769 by Professor Anderson may well have been any one of the three mentioned above. In addition to these paintings, there is a medal by Antonio Selvi and a paste medallion cast by James Tassie. Both derive from the same wax model, which, according to J. M. Gray,<sup>5</sup> was made by Isaac Gosset 'under the direction and care of Basil [this should surely be Dunbar] Hamilton, afterwards Earl of Selkirk'. I have not seen the medallion, but the medal, a specimen of which is in the University of Glasgow, shows even Gosset's wax to have been a second-hand image based entirely on the Ramsay portrait. A print illustrating this medal was

made by Bartolozzi in 1780 for Thomas Hollis;<sup>6</sup> this, still further removed from the original, is, as far as I can find, the only engraved portrait.

As the original of all the surviving portraiture of Hutcheson, the University picture possesses considerable historical value; this has been recognised by its inclusion, at long last correctly attributed, in the recent Edinburgh Exhibition of portraits of Scottish Literary Personalities of the Eighteenth Century. But its merits as an example of Ramsay's art, dating probably a year or so before Hutcheson's death in 1746, are just as great. Ramsay is already famous for his portraits of two other philosophers, Hume and Rousseau. His 'Hutcheson', a comparatively early work, lacks the understanding and insight shown in these paintings of his full maturity; it is, none the less, a worthy predecessor.

<sup>4</sup> Francis Hutcheson, *His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy*, 1900, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> James and William Tassie, 1894, p. 118.

<sup>6</sup> *The Memoirs of Thomas Hollis*, 1780, II, fac. p. 286.

## ZAVERTAL

Dr. Henry G. Farmer has added to his already formidable list of books on various aspects of the history of music and its makers, a new book on Cavaliere Zavertal. Of special interest to us is the account of the early teaching days in Glasgow and the final link with the University in the gift of Mozart Relics, etc. to the library. Dr. Farmer shows his affection and regard for his old master, and brings to light both his qualities and the importance of his place in British Military Music. This he does in a flowing style which makes the narrative easy to follow and creates in the reader's mind the picture of a remarkable individual.

*Zavertal and the Royal Artillery Band* (Hinrichsen Edition Limited).

*The cost of the illustrations of the two preceding articles has been met by a generous donation from the National Bank of Scotland.*

## A SCOTTISH CONVERSATION PIECE

JOHN GLASSFORD of Dougalston, one of Glasgow's great Tobacco Lords, died in 1783. Not only is his name commemorated by a street called after him, but those interested may still see from Ingram Street the family tombstone just inside the railings of the old Ramshorn Churchyard. It is therefore of particular interest to Glasgow that through the generosity of one of his descendants, Mr. John Duncan, M.B.E., the Art Gallery now possesses a painting of John Glassford and his family.

This fine conversation piece, some six feet by seven feet, was painted by Archibald McLauchlan and shows John Glassford, his third wife Lady Mary Mackenzie and seven of his children, all but the two youngest being children of his former marriages. Barely discernible behind his master's chair, as befits an important Virginia merchant, is a negro servant, while silhouetted against the open window is a small parakeet, both doubtless brought back by one of Glassford's sea captains. Through the open window is a view of the extensive walled gardens of his home, Shawfield Mansion, with two deer in the park; a mirror, to the right of the window, reflects a busy street scene symbolising perhaps Glassford's multifarious business interests. With twenty-four ships plying to America and the West Indies, having an annual turnover of half a million pounds, he was the largest ship owner in the city. His firm, one of forty-six foreign trading houses dealing in tobacco, was alone responsible for more than a quarter of all tobacco imported into Glasgow. Glassford was also a director of several of the early Glasgow Banks, and his name appears as a generous subscriber to the Foulis Academy and to the building funds of the Assembly Rooms, the scene of all the fashionable Balls and Assemblies. Although a Bailie, he never became Provost or Dean of Guild of the Merchant House as one

might have expected of such a prominent citizen.

When in 1760 Glassford purchased Shawfield Mansion from Col. William McDowall he became the owner of the finest house in Glasgow. It was designed by Colin Campbell and built in 1711, with extensive grounds stretching as far as present-day Glassford Street. It is probable that John Glassford built the elaborate gates and policy walls, at the south-west and south-east corners of which, 'lofty stone portals' supported sculptured stone sphinxes. The house was demolished in 1792 but the sphinxes survived, and are now preserved in the Art Gallery, although not on exhibition. A drawing of one of them forms the tail-piece to this sketch.

Since Shawfield was the most imposing mansion of its day, it is not surprising that Prince Charles Edward chose it as his residence when he and his followers paid Glasgow a brief but unwelcome visit in the winter of 1745. In this connection it is interesting to note that also included in the collection is a portrait of Andrew Cochrane, Provost at that time, as well as a receipt for the fine of five thousand five hundred pounds imposed on Glasgow citizens by the unwelcome visitors for their lack of enthusiasm towards the Jacobite cause. A more welcome visitor, however, some five years later, was General Wolfe. Before sailing for Quebec he was entertained at Shawfield by Col. McDowall on several occasions, and his views on the ladies of Glasgow are illuminating. In a letter Wolfe describes them as being 'coarse, cold and cunning, forever enquiring after men's circumstances', adding 'they make that the standard of good breeding'.

As noted earlier, Glassford was a generous benefactor of the Foulis Academy, and it was natural that he should commission one of its best students to paint his family group. His



ARCHIBALD MCLAUCHLAN

THE GLASSFORD FAMILY  
*Oil on canvas, 87 x 78 ins.*

choice was Archibald McLauchlan, a contemporary of David Allan at the Foulis Academy, and one of the few students to be sent to Italy under its auspices. While in Rome, McLauchlan produced some notable 'historic-paintings', one of his best being a copy of Raphael's famous School of Athens fresco. The artist's signature may be seen on the stretcher of the chair on which his patron is seated, followed by 'Royal Academy'. If, as family records suggest, the painting was executed a year or two after Glassford's third marriage in 1768, the Royal Academy was then in being. McLauchlan, however, was never a member, nor does search reveal his

name in Grave's Royal Academy Exhibitors. A closer inspection will show that the small area around 'Royal' has been repaired. It is possible that the restorer, never having heard of the Foulis Academy, although it preceded the founding of the Royal Academy by fifteen years, substituted 'Royal' for the missing 'Foulis' when the small damaged portion was repainted.

It is known that McLauchlan married one of Robert Foulis' daughters, but little is recorded of his artistic career. This example of his work proves that he was a competent painter with a good sense of colour and composition. The painting which has a fresh

naïveté, has the added charm of giving a fascinating glimpse into the life of one of Glasgow's great eighteenth century figures. Scottish conversation pieces of this nature are comparatively rare, and this is not only the first of its kind to be included in the Collection, but it is also the first work by McLauchlan to be gifted to the Gallery.



W. J. M.

#### NOTES ON CONDITION AND TREATMENT OF THE PAINTING

by H. McLEAN

When the picture was received in December last, the condition was very far from satisfactory. It had presumably been panelled in a wall, as the canvas support lacked the usual wooden stretcher and the tattered edges bore signs of much tacking—well over the pigmented line of demarcation. When the canvas was unrolled it was found to be in three sections held together only by inches of very frail canvas. The preliminary steps in conservation were to adhere layers of detail paper to the face side; and thus to an extent limit the risk of more pigment crumbling away. When the protective layer of paper had thoroughly dried out, the picture was turned face down and the process of strengthening commenced. Due to the ominous dimensions of the work and the difficulty of obtaining 'lining canvas' of suitable width, the method of 'strip-lining' (by necessity rather than choice) was adopted.

The picture had previously been lined by the 'glue-paste' method, and for the benefit of securing a proper ground, it was necessary to remove lengths of the old 'lining canvas', corresponding in width to the new canvas.

The strips of new canvas were waxed to the original picture canvas, and when this was completed the picture was stretched to a wooden stretcher which had been specially made to size.

The usual tests were carried out and cleaning commenced towards the end of January of this year.

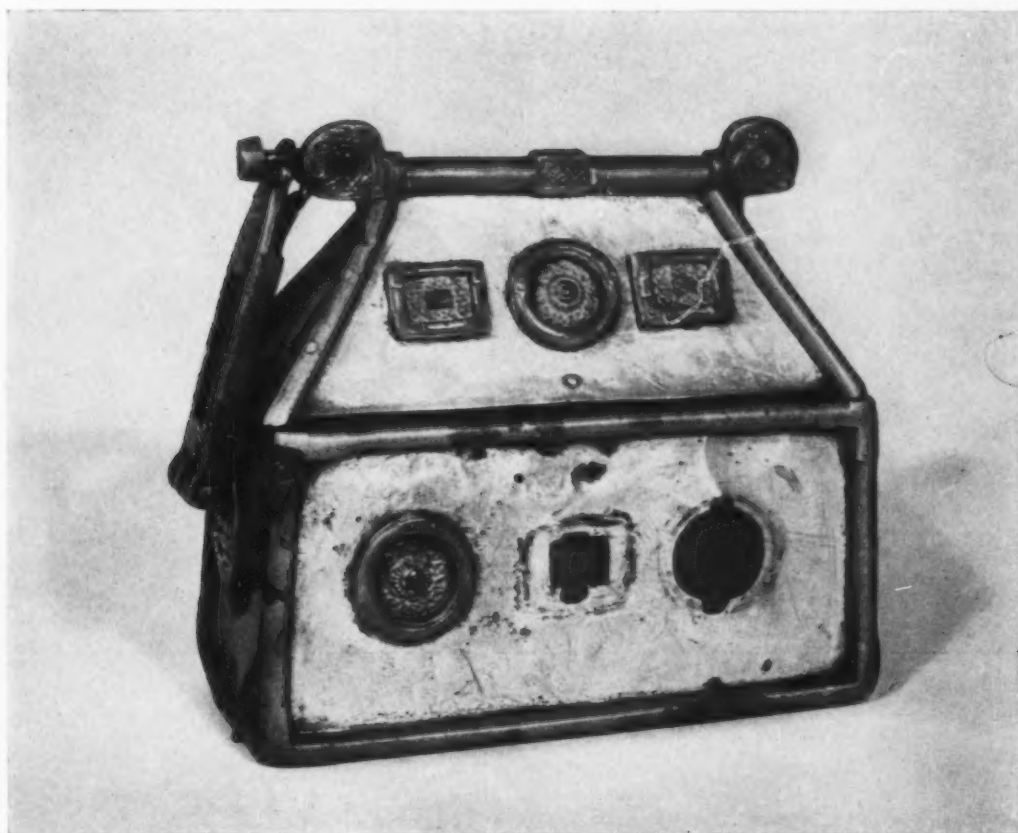
After a certain amount of varnish had been removed from the area around Mrs. John Glassford, a little to the left and directly above the head of the small child, the outline of a head became visible. This 'under-painting' was later established from comparison in drawing as the original positioning of Mrs. Glassford, and had more than likely been altered by the artist. Part of the signature on the spar of John Glassford's chair at the left hand corner was completely false. Where 'A. McLauchlan' appeared to be perfectly authentic, 'Royal' was a very much later addition.



DETAIL OF 'GLASSFORD FAMILY' showing condition of paint-layer after removal of varnish.

Many of the scars and blemishes will be a permanent feature. Meanwhile we have adhered to the decision 'Partially restore and make presentable'.





CELTIC, 7TH CENTURY A.D.

RELICUARY OF ST COLUMBA  
Known as the *Monymusk Reliquary* or the *Brechennoch of St Columba*

*The National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh*  
(See article—'Scotland's Ancient Treasures')



SCHOOL OF CANALETTO

GRAND CANAL, VENICE  
*Oil on canvas, 30 x 50 ins.*

*The Glasgow Art Gallery*



GEORGES SEURAT

MAISON DANS LES ARBRES  
Oil on panel,  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 10$  ins.

*The Glasgow Art Gallery—McInnes Collection*



GEORGES BRAQUE

NATURE MORTE  
*Oil on canvas, 19 x 23 ins.*

*The Glasgow Art Gallery—McInnes Collection*

## THE NETSUKÉ OF JAPAN

THE marvellous skill of the artist craftsman of old Japan found expression in various ways, but in none perhaps more attractively than in the creation of the tiny carvings in wood or ivory known as netsuké.

The netsuké served the practical end of holding suspended from the wearer's sash such necessities as his purse, his medicine-case, and his tobacco-pouch. In early times it was no more than a plain toggle, but as artistic taste developed, its decorative possibilities were exploited, and eventually it won a place for itself amongst other works of art. Many artists devoted themselves exclusively to netsuké-making, and some won widespread renown.

It was about the end of the sixteenth century that the first netsuké of real artistic merit were made. During the Gen-roku Era (1688-1703) the netsuké came prominently into fashion as an adjunct to Japanese costume; but the craft really reached the height of its perfection during the first few years of the nineteenth century. The opening up of Japan in 1868, and the consequent trend towards the adoption of European customs and dress, dealt the death-blow to the netsuké as an object of practical utility.

Anyone who examines with attention a good collection of netsuké is bound to be amazed at the extraordinary ability with which human figures, animals, and inanimate objects of all kinds are reproduced on so small a scale, within the compass of an inch or two. He will be fascinated, too, by the liveliness of these miniature representations of men at work or play, of animals in characteristic postures, of the tiger about to spring, of the monkeys in the midst of their antics. And he will be charmed by the whimsical humour of the artist, which gives frequent expression to the Japanese love of the quaint and grotesque, and to their keen appreciation of the ridiculous.

Quite astonishing too is the almost inexhaustible variety of the subjects represented in a collection of netsuké. From the gods and saints downwards through a bewildering series of supernatural and semi-supernatural beings, demons, mermaids, and mythical monsters, one descends to the heroes of Japanese history and legend. Besides these, there are to be found figures typical of everyday life—such as the priest, the peasant, the artisan, and the beggar, animals both wild and tame, and a host of familiar and unfamiliar objects of almost every imaginable kind.

The illustrations which accompany this article, photographs of a few typical items selected from a large collection recently acquired by the Royal Scottish Museum, will convey some idea of the absorbing interest which netsuké can arouse. (See p. 22).

The seven Japanese Gods of Good Luck, familiar to all students of Japanese art, are kindly creatures with characteristics somewhat like those of our Santa Claus. Starting from the top left-hand corner, in illustration No. 1 we see them sailing in their treasure-ship, which comes into port on New Year's Eve with a cargo of good things for distribution.

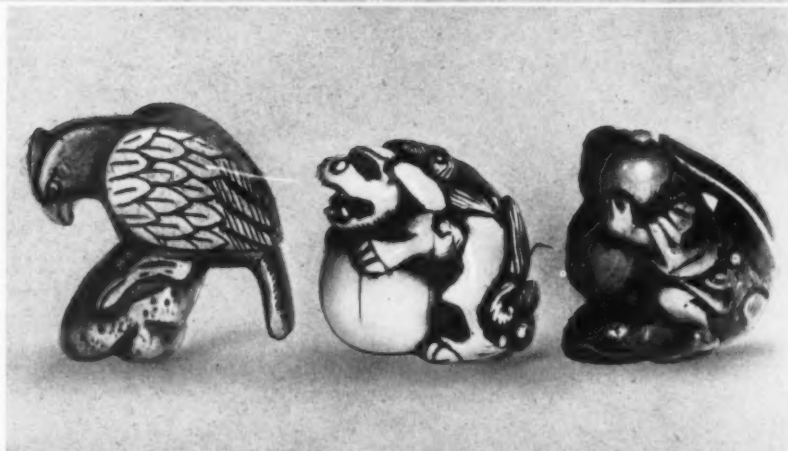
The Gama Sennin (No. 2) is a quaint demi-god with magical powers, who is invariably shown, as here, in close association with his familiar, the three-legged toad.

The netsuké artist lets his imagination and humour have full play with the *oni*, the little imps who lurked everywhere and were constantly playing mischievous tricks. Illustration No. 3 shows one of these little demons climbing on to a *doko*, or conventionalised thunderbolt. The *doko*, made of bronze, is a sacred symbol used by Buddhist priests for driving off evil spirits. Here, with irreverent humour, the artist has brought together the demon and its apparently ineffectual antidote.





THE ELEVEN  
NETSUKE  
FROM JAPAN  
(described in text)



The great enemy of the *oni* is Shoki, who looks very fierce, but is constantly being teased and tricked by his small tormentors, and seldom succeeds in catching them. The *oni* in illustration No. 4 has got hold of Shoki's sword, and is trying on his mask.

No. 5 is a lively study of a hawk perched on a rock. The creature represented in No. 6, however, exists only in the imagination of Japanese artists. He is a *shishi*, a ferocious-looking dog-like animal whose prototype was probably the lion. The *shishi* is seldom without his plaything, the brocaded ball.

Earthquakes are frequent in Japan, and the old belief was that they were caused by the uneasy stirrings of a mighty monster, the Namazu, who lay buried, but alive, beneath the mainland of Japan. His efforts to free himself, however, could be successfully met by the application to his body of a magical gourd. The Namazu, which looks not unlike a huge eel with a large flat head, is shown, under the control of the god Kadori Myojin, in No. 7.

No. 8 is a *Komuso*, a Japanese gentleman whose circumstances have become so straitened that he has been reduced to earning an honest copper by playing his flute in the street. Ashamed of his poverty, he conceals his identity by wearing a basket over his head to hide his face.

Kengyu and Shokujo (No. 9) are the hero and heroine of a fairy tale which involves a romantic love-story, with the familiar features of parental opposition and a happy ending. Kengyu, the herdsman (hence the ox which appears beside him) wins, after much tribulation, the beautiful Shokujo, daughter of the Sun, and the Japanese legend tells us how they still meet once a year, the bride tripping lightly across the heavens to her husband on a bridge of birds.

To write a poem with one hand while holding a heavy cauldron above the head with the other is no easy task. It is, however, on the performance of this extraordinary feat that the fame of the legendary Goshisho rests (No. 10).

The last item (No. 11) illustrates the popu-

lar Japanese folk-tale of the famous hero Benkei and the Bell of Miidera. Benkei was a monk in the monastery of Enryakuji, on the mountain of Hiei, above Miidera, near Kyoto. He coveted the bell of the rival monastery at Miidera on account of its mellow musical note, stole it one dark night, brought it back single-handed, and hung it up. But alas! in its new home it refused to ring; the only sound that it would give out when it was struck was a plaintive wail which sounded like: 'Take me back to Miidera!' In spite of all his efforts, Benkei could not cure the bell of its home-sickness, so at last, losing his temper completely, he took it down and gave it a hearty kick which set it rolling downhill to its old home. The monks of Miidera gladly restored their precious bell to its proper place, and there to this day you may see it, and take, if you like, the big dents in its sides for proof of the story.

## THE COLOUR PLATES

(See pages 17 to 20)

*The Monymusk Reliquary* is not perhaps so much a work of art as an item of great historical importance. The experts date it as probably a century after the death of St. Columba in A.D. 597. It came into the possession of the family of Monymusk in 1315 and through the aid of the National Art-Collections Fund was acquired by the National Museum of Antiquities in 1923.

*Grand Canal, Venice.* This characteristic painting with its panoramic qualities of the Venetian scene was formerly attributed to Canaletto. Its exact attribution is still a matter of doubt. We are content to call it a school picture.

*Maison dans les Arbres.* The Seurat is one of two small panels from the McInnes Collection painted about 1883. It shows the technical approach adopted by the Impressionists more particularly in the development of Pointillism.

*Nature Morte.* An example of the work of the great French painter, Georges Braque, who, along with Picasso created the movement known as Cubism. It was painted in 1926. Together with the Matisse, 'La Nappe Rose' (reproduced in the first number of the *Review*) it forms a notable feature of contemporary still life painting. Both artists exercised considerable influence on subsequent developments.

## STAFFORDSHIRE SLIPWARE DISHES

THERE have recently been acquired by the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, two unusually interesting Staffordshire slipware dishes of a type well known, but hitherto unrepresented in the Collections.

English pottery of medieval times was made of the ordinary local clays which burnt to various shades of buff, brown, and red, and it was not until the beginning of the seventeenth century that clays which fired to a white or pale yellow colour began to be employed. Such light-burning clays were scarce, and they were accordingly reserved for purely decorative purposes on these so-called slipwares.

Slip, the thick creamy fluid obtained by the diffusion of clay in water, is commonly applied either as a surface wash or as a pigment. The most successful of the slipwares are those in which the decoration is formed by pouring the slip out of a spouted vessel or



SLIPWARE DISH

CIRCA 1690-1700

through a quill in much the same way as sugar icing is applied to a cake to produce designs in palpable relief.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century slip decorated wares were made in many parts of the country, and this class of peasant pottery persisted in remote districts well into the nineteenth century, long after factory-made articles were in general use.

The earliest English slipwares appear to have been made at Wrotham, the oldest known piece from this Kentish village being an elaborately decorated tyg dated 1612. Slightly later are the Metropolitan wares, so called from their having been found in the neighbourhood of London, inscribed with dates ranging from 1630 to 1670.

The finest examples, however, come from Burslem and Shelton in North Staffordshire. These have designs of a more pictorial character and show a greater variety of colour than those produced in other districts. The most attractive and sought-after are the large dishes of the type illustrated here. Made of a



SLIPWARE DISH

CIRCA 1670

*Staffordshire Slipware Dishes*

coarse reddish or yellowish buff clay and measuring seventeen or eighteen inches in diameter and about three inches in depth, the front of the dish is coated with white slip. Upon this ground the main outlines of the design are traced with brown slip. This is usually punctuated with white dots, and the interspaces are filled in with flat washes of a deep orange colour. Finally, a lead glaze of yellowish tone gives to the whole a rich quality which constitutes one of its principal charms.

The most common subjects of representation are rude but vigorously delineated figures or busts of royal personages, heraldic animals and birds, and conventional flowers. The rims are wide and flat and decorated with a trellis pattern formed of oblique lines in two shades of brown. This border invariably contains a panel inscribed with a name which is almost certainly that of the potter. The names most commonly met with are Thomas Toft and his brother Ralph, hence the appellation 'Toft ware' sometimes assigned to this class of ware.

The Museum's recently acquired dishes bear two well-known names, WILLIAM TALOR and RALPH SIMPSON. The former, which can be dated to about 1670, shows a conventionalised rendering of the Boscobel Oak with the head of Charles II appearing between its branches. This is flanked by royal supporters, the lion and the unicorn; and there is the usual trellis border with the potter's name inscribed in boldly drawn characters.

An almost identical specimen by the same potter occurs in the Glaisher Collection, in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and another made by Thomas Toft was presented by Mrs. Charles Lomax to the British Museum in 1935.

The Ralph Simpson dish, which must date from c. 1690-1700, shows a favourite subject, a full-length portrait of William III attired in royal robes and wearing a crown; the initials W.R., conventional flowers and vesica ornament occupy the remainder of the field.

REVIEWS

THE  
SCOTTISH HOGARTH

DR. T. CROUTHER GORDON publishes from his Manse of Clackmannan a book which really contributes to the History of Scottish Art. Printed and bound in Clackmannan, this book deals with the eighteenth century Alloa artist, David Allan. It is published in the good old-fashioned way by subscription. Such enterprise deserves our respect. Dr. Crouther Gordon is not an art critic. It is clear from the trite and conventional way in which he discusses form and colour that he is external to the subject. He is an historian not an aesthete. He is, however, a patient and thorough researcher—this book has been the toil of twelve years—and, as it happens, these qualifications and not critical acumen are what the book required. David Allan has long been neglected. What was needed was a book in which were to be found all the facts available about his life and training, his pictures and prints, his relations with patrons and other artists. Such a book is now in our hands, illustrated with thirty-five plates and equipped with a catalogue of the artist's works.

David Allan, born at Alloa in 1744, was sent at an early age to study at the Academy of the Foulis Brothers at Glasgow University. This extraordinary school, with its collection of 533 Old Master paintings, including 39 so-called Raphaels and 22 more than doubtful Titians, and its staff of two Italians and three Frenchmen who had difficulties with the language, this school offered free instruction to lads of promise. David Allan was nine years with the great-hearted Foulis Brothers and must have learned some drawing and painting as well as engraving. The engraving was to serve him in good stead in later life, and it is due to his boyish skill with the graver that we owe two prints of the Academy, one showing an open-air exhibition in the quadrangle, and the other the students at

work in their ground-floor room with its 'South Light'. What fantastic and delightful prints they are!

It is perhaps not to be wondered at that Allan left Glasgow for Rome to complete his education. He was there for thirteen years. If during all this time he remained a recip-

historical pictures. Portraits were their only need. So Allan sighed a little and turned to portraiture. In England, Hogarth, Gainsborough, Zoffany and others had popularised the Conversation Piece, Allan now domesticated it in Scotland.

What charming things are these portrait



DAVID ALLAN

STOOL OF REPENTANCE  
Tinted Drawing, 11½ × 13½ ins.

ient of the generosity of aristocratic patrons (the Erskines, the Cathcarts and others), then he was better treated than is any student of the Welfare State. But, doubtless, most of his time was spent in copying Old Masters, and for these there was ready sale. Doubtless, too, he painted portraits and made small, saleable compositions. Certainly he got a very thorough training, and when he returned home he must have been the best-equipped artist in the North Country. He was, Dr. Gordon shows, extremely good-natured. The noble patrons who found him employment remained his friends throughout. They would not, however, give him commissions for grand

groups of David Allan. *The Connoisseurs*, so simple, so elegant, so easy and complete, is surely one of the most delightful of all eighteenth-century groups? Then there is the *Atholl family*. His Grace in Highland garb presents to his chubby little heir a black-cock which he has just shot. The Duchess and other children, dogs, game and a gillie complete the group, which is set in the lovely Highland country with Blair Castle in the distance. This and other conversation pieces are real achievements, illustrating Allan's skill in design, sympathy in portraiture, and feeling for landscape.

Allan, being thoroughly trained, could and



### Reviews

did turn his hand to many branches of picture-making. But he is remembered rightly as the precursor of Wilkie and the 'genre' painters of the nineteenth century. He was the first Scottish artist to represent the short and simple annals of the poor. He illustrated Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* and the poems of his younger contemporary, Burns. He has long been labelled 'The Scottish Hogarth', and Dr. Crouther Gordon uses the phrase in the title of his book. True, he was like Hogarth painter and engraver, painter of portraits and conversations, painter and engraver of 'genre'. But as a man, Allan, gentle amiable and retiring, was the very antipode of the bitter, egomaniac Hogarth. The savage satirical character of Hogarth's work is remarkable for its absence in the Scot. Hogarth was and is a far greater figure in the world of Art. But David Allan was no inconsiderable artist, and all of us who care for the subject are in Dr. Crouther Gordon's debt for demonstrating this so convincingly in his book.

*David Allan, The Scottish Hogarth*, by T. Crouther Gordon (Published by Subscription) 30/-. Copies from The Manse, Clackmannan.

D. P. Bliss

### DRAWINGS

In recent years there has been a considerable revival of interest in old master drawings. Various exhibitions, particularly in the south, have been the means of demonstrating the peculiar fascination for serious students. 'The first attack' of an artist on his aesthetic problems are often more revealing than the end result. It was inevitable therefore, that a series of publications would follow the revived interest and it is a pleasure to salute and welcome four excellent volumes from Messrs. Faber and Faber. This year, under the general editorship of Dr. K. T. Parker, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Messrs. John Woodward, Nicolas Powell, Brinsley Ford and J. Byam Shaw have each undertaken a specific theme and handled it with distinction. The intro-

ductions to each reflect scholarship and industry of a high order and we are confident that this series will be established as an essential for both students and collectors.

*Tudor and Stuart Drawings* by John Woodward (25/- net)

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*The Drawings of Richard Wilson* by Brinsley Ford (27/6d net)

*The Drawings of Francesco Guardi* by J. Byam Shaw (27/6d net)  
(Faber and Faber)

A contemporary painter, Sir William Russell Flint, P.R.W.S., R.A., has long been known for his persistence and consistence on a line of approach particularly in the realm of paintings of the nude, and it is appropriate that his observations, with illustrations of his wide range of achievements, should be collected in book form. This is, in every sense, an elaborate publication. With one exception, none of the pictures illustrated has previously been reproduced, and, as a piece of collaboration between artist and printer, it merits the highest possible praise. The price, which is not in any sense extravagant, makes the volume a collector's piece and as such, will stand as an example of how this kind of work should be treated.

*Drawings by Sir William Russell Flint* (Collins, £4 4/- net)

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MR. W. CYRIL WALLIS. Assistant Keeper of Department of Art and Ethnography, Royal Scottish Museum.

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The story of this development is told in a recently issued booklet, *Educational Experiment 1941-1951*. The publication gives some idea of the early difficulties encountered, of how the problems of finding space and staff were gradually solved, and of the many aspects of museum educational work now being undertaken by the department.

The brochure, which is illustrated by 24 half-page photographs, is on sale at the Gallery book stall, price 2/6.

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The **GLASGOW CITIZEN** gave a faithful, factual record of the Great Exhibition, 1851, in the ornate language of the period.

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